REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17. Claims 1-24 are all the claims pending in the application. In response to the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims define patentable subject matter.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative in the interview conducted on April 23, 2008.

I.   Statement of Substance of Interview

During the interview, the Examiner and Applicant's representative discussed the cited reference, McNabb, and whether the claimed limitation "receiving the request at the database, from the requester, to access the contents of the classified table elements" reads on the cited reference. The Examiner maintained her position, but suggested that if the independent claims are amended to recite "receiving the request _directly_ at the database, from the requester, to access the contents of the classified table elements", this amendment may be enough to overcome the cited reference.

II.   Overview of the Office Action

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-12, 15, 17-20, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNabb et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,289,462, hereafter "McNabb") in view of Hue et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0126845, hereafter "Hue"). Claims 5, 6, 13, 14, 21, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNabb in view of Hue and further in view of Tashenberg (U.S. Patent Application Publication No.

2001/0034711). Claims 8, 6, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable

over McNabb in view of Hue and further in view of Hepworth (U.S. Patent Application

Publication No. 2006/0032920). Claims 1, 9, and 17 are objected to because of an informality.

III.   Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1, 9 and 17 because the phrase "input

classification parameters" is allegedly unclear.

Applicant respectfully submits that the phrase "input classification parameters" is

clearly disclosed in the original specification. Page 1 of the specification discloses that the

classification stored in and associated with each row of a data table provides information

about the classification or sensitivity of the data in that row. Different classifications may be

assigned to different users. Pages 8 and 12 of the specification discloses that arguments to

the classification parameters may include information about the various authorization IDs

associated with the current request, the current session authorization ID, and the

authorization ID used to establish the connection to the RDBMS. Accordingly, Applicant

respectfully submits that the phrase "input classification parameters" is adequately disclosed

in the original specification, and requests that the Examiner remove the objection to the

claims.

IV.   Prior Art Rejections

The Examiner alleges that McNabb discloses all of the features of independent claim 1

and analogous independent claims 9 and 17 except for the feature "the data processing system

external to a classification engine". Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's

position.

Amended claim 1 and analogous claims 9 and 17 recite in part:

receiving the request directly at the database, from the requestor, to access the
contents of the classified table elements.

Applicant respectfully submits that this feature of the claims is neither taught nor

suggested by the cited reference. FIG. 1 of the present invention clearly shows that a request

from a requestor 20 is received directly at a database 10 (see also paragraph [0014]).

The Examiner appears to read the claimed database on the Back-end Database Server

(element 510 of FIG. 9 of McNabb) and the claimed classification engine on the Security Gate

(504) of McNabb. Column 14, lines 19-23 of McNabb <u>clearly</u> discloses that requests that are

processed at the web server that need access to information in secured partitions are handled by

the <u>Security Gate,</u> (element 504) and <u>not</u> directly by the <u>database</u> as required by the claim. The

present invention clearly discloses that requests are received by the database (paragraph [0017])

and the classification engine is <u>then</u> called to determine whether a user is authorized to access the

database (paragraph [0007]).

Further, NcNabb appears to discloses that the Security Gate may prevent some requests

from reaching the database (column 17, lines 15-45). This differs from the present invention

where al user requests are sent to the database, and the classification level of the requestor is then

determined by the database.

In McNabb, requests which have an original security level are received at the Security

Gate which may be operating at a higher security level. Authorized requests may have their

security levels modified in order to conform to the security level of the back end database.

Accordingly, it appears that all requests by a user are always received by the Security Gate (504)

and not by the database. McNabb discloses that when a user requests access to a resource behind

the firewall, the system initially determines from the level originally assigned to the user, how to

direct the request, and what processes it is permitted to initiate. The uses may then be prompted

that the information requested is unavailable if their level is not authorized (column 20, lines 20-

28). This also shows that the request is received at the Security Gate and not at the database,

since the user is not granted access to the database if their security level is not granted access to

the database. This clearly differs from the claimed invention where requests are received at the

database.

In the previous Amendment filed on December 28, 2007, Applicant submitted that there

is no teaching or suggestion in McNabb of the feature "for each classified table element, the

database asking the classification engine to provide an indication of whether the requestor

associated with the request is to be permitted access to the contents of the respective classified

table element", as recited in independent claim 1 and analogously required by independent

claims 9 and 17.

In response, the Examiner asserts:

First of all, the Examiner would like to note that newly added limitation does not
define "asking step", instead it disclosed one activity being a part of asking step.
In other words "asking step" may require few actions to take place, and the
newly amended portion lists an activity being one of them.[1]

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[1] Page 8 of the Office Action

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's position and finds the Examiner's position unclear.

As discussed above, the original specification clearly discloses that arguments to the classification parameters may include information about the various authorization IDs associated with the current request, the current session authorization ID, and the authorization ID used to establish the connection to the RDBMS. These arguments to the classification parameters are then sent to the classification engine in order to determine whether a user may have access to the database. Applicant respectfully submits that there is no teaching or suggestion in McNabb that arguments to classification parameters are sent to a classification engine in order to provide an indication of whether the requestor is to be permitted access to the contents of the classified table element as required by the claims.

The Examiner appears to read the claimed "asking" step on "replies (SL$_2$)" in FIG. 9. However the "replies (SL$_2$)" step of McNabb is clearly a <u>reply</u> <u>from</u> the database to a request from the Security Gate, which <u>clearly</u> differs from the claimed invention, which requires that a request is sent from the database to the classification engine.

Hue does not cure the deficiencies of McNabb.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, and 17 should be allowable because the cited references do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims. Claims 2-8, 10-16, and 18-24 should also be allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on independent claims 1, 9, and 17.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed

to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is

kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue

Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any

overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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